

Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 9, 2021, 5:00 – 6:15 pm

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Attending (16): Marie Curtis, Peggy Dellinger, Dallas Grove, Robert Grove (off-board), Jayne Mackta (off-board), Evelyn Murphy, Wilma Pfeffer, Nancy Sabino, Annette Scott, Susan Sferas, Pat Supplee, Anne Ugrovics. Member Guests: Cordella Golden, Marybeth Kelman, Dale Chant. LWVVJ Liaison: Anne Torre.

Opening –

- DEI Policy Pledge—Read by Marybeth

Standing business (Distributed in Advance)

- Minutes of August Meeting: Motion passed to accept.
- Treasurer's Report: Income YTD \$1,840.72; YTD Expenses \$391.06.
- Team Activity Reports: Corrected the date of the next ILO Board meeting to November (not September) 3.
- No Announcements.

Presentation and Discussion: The LWVSMC in Context

Evelyn led a presentation and discussion of the League at all levels to establish a baseline of understanding and to explore where we are strong and where we need to improve.

- Brainstorm: What makes you proud of or excited about the League?
Evelyn invited participants to share. Thoughts included:
 - Exciting programs, including Reenter-Register-Vote and Energizing Young Voters
 - Level of activity and demand for our services
 - Leadership shown by LWVSMC and recognized by other Leagues
 - The foresight and hard work of our League to reinvent and equip itself to be effective in changed times. The LWVNJ has also adapted to the times.
- Presentation: The LWVSMC in Context
Evelyn established a foundation of information that put our local League in a broader context: our beginnings, our local membership policies (including our commitment that financial considerations should never affect membership); the other layers of League (ILO, LWVNJ, LWVUS), including their functions and LWVSMC's representation in their governance; and League's guiding policies, basic principles, mission, vision, and value. (*Presentation slides posted with meeting documents on lwvscm.org.*)
- Discussion: Structural Strengths and Weaknesses
Evelyn invited participants to share their thoughts. Responses included:
 - **Strength:** 101 years of **experience** and a hard-earned **reputation**
 - **Strength/Weakness:** Flexibility for state and local Leagues to **adapt to different conditions**, which in turn can lead to **deviations** and **communication breakdowns**.
 - **Strength/Weakness:** **Grassroots organization** where power rests with the membership, which can make League **slow to respond** to rapidly changing conditions. The challenge is to find the sweet spot between grassroots input and executive decisions in response to real-time situations that warrant League action.

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- *Strength/Weakness*: Our **nonpartisanship** is a long-standing strength. However, if strictly interpreted, it **limits the involvement** of many members who take part in partisan activities—a limitation that has grown over the past six years.
 - *Weakness*: Low candidate response rate for VOTE411.
 - In the course of the discussion, Anne Ugrovics volunteered to observe the Ocean County Board of Commissioners. Evelyn will connect her to the video of the Observer Corps Training and to Marie who is overseeing the Observer Corps.

Focused Strategic Discussion: Fulfilling our Role in November 2021 Elections

Evelyn reviewed the LWVSMC/ILO role in the November 2021 Elections and invited the Board to discuss strategies for engaging members more fully in the work. Discussion covered:

- Efforts to understand changes to the voting process
 - Sent three ILO members to poll-worker training (Marianne Kligman, Vanessa Merhi, and Carole Beyer). They shared what they learned with the team putting together the “Election 2021: What’s New? What’s Different?” webinars.
- How we’re helping voters understand and feel comfortable with voting (including the changes)
 - Delivering the “Election 2021: What’s New? What’s Different?” webinar at 3 PM, Sunday, September 19. The webinar is targeted but not limited to Monmouth County League members. The objective is to equip LWV members to be a resource of their personal networks and to encourage them to recruit and schedule groups for other webinars.
 - Offering the election webinar to any organization or group who requests it.
- Staffing and Promoting Voter Registration Initiatives

(The list of events is included in the August Team Reports. The Pride event scheduled for October in Asbury Park and listed in the report has been postponed until next June based on COVID considerations.)

 - Looking for members to take charge of managing local registration events
 - LWVSMC will be participating in National Voter Registration Day, September 28, and National Vote Early Day, October 23 (coincidentally NJ’s first day of early in-person voting).
- Vote411 and Candidate Forums
 - Volunteer Champions are encouraging candidates to participate in VOTE411. The team is covering County Level races in Monmouth and Ocean Counties and municipal and board of education races in more than 40 municipalities.
 - We are working to staff and manage Candidate Forums.
- Suggestions for engaging more members
 - Create position of Volunteer Coordinator.
 - Use our mentors to invite their mentees to take part in appropriate/suitable event (one-on-one, personal connection).
 - Wilma is now calling new members to welcome them and help connect them to activities of interest. It has already paid off. One new member reached out to and is working with Annette.

Meeting adjourned at 6:15

Next Board meeting: Thursday, October 14, 12:30 – 1:45 pm
